

## Legislation Text

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December 4, 2014

**TO THE PRESIDENT AND MEMBERS OF THE  
COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA:**

I am hereby returning unsigned Bill No. 140695, which passed Council on November 20, 2014, and would amend the FY2015 Operating Budget to transfer \$500,000 in Class 200 Appropriations from Prisons to the Office of Housing and Community Development.

Vision and creativity are central to governing in a way that improves our City and the lives of residents and communities. Equally central is sound budgeting. Budgets require planning, forethought, and willingness to make difficult decisions. Any less, and we would fall short in our collective obligation to be wise stewards of public resources.

My Administration has been, and remains, steadfastly open to partnering with Council to set priorities through the budget, and to consider the kind of program the sponsor seeks here: neighborhood clean-up services to be performed by returning citizens who need jobs and experience. To do that, we must engage in the critical process of deciding where the funds should come from.

When reallocating priorities in an existing budget, it is not sufficient to pass a transfer ordinance that funds one program, but does so by undermining the operations of a public safety agency. Rather than engage in the hard work of fiscal planning, this transfer ordinance takes half a million dollars from the Prison system, with no plan for how to fill the gap in appropriations-spending authority that the Prison System is relying on to maintain operations this year.

Let me be clear. There is no inherent reason the program envisioned here cannot be realized. It does, however, require informed, careful decisions about what such a program should accomplish, how it should operate, how and when to allocate resources. My door is open. My Administration and I would be happy to discuss a realistic plan for funding and implementing this program as part of the FY16 budget process.

Respectfully  
MICHAEL A. NUTTER